

Cooperative Marine Turtle Tagging Program

Annual Report
to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center
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In April 1999, the management of the Cooperative Marine Turtle Tagging Program (CMTTP) was transferred from the Miami Laboratory of the Southeast Fisheries Science Center to the Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research (ACCSTR) at the University of Florida. This report describes the activities and accomplishments of the CMTTP during its first year.

Activities Related to the Transfer of CMTTP to ACCSTR

1. File cabinets with all paper files and all computer files were transferred to the ACCSTR in Gainesville, Florida, in March 1999.
2. Notices of the transfer of CMTTP were published in the *Marine Turtle Newsletter* and distributed over the listserv CTURTLE.
3. We revised all CMTTP instruction and policy documents with full review by NMFS:
 - CMTTP Requesting Tags and Data Policy
 - CMTTP Protocols for Handling, Tagging, and Measuring Marine Turtles
4. We combined the CMTTP data sheets into one 1-page form with full review by NMFS: CMTTP Tagging Data Form
5. We revised the CMTTP tag request form, with full review by NMFS, to include a request for payment for tags and applicators and to ask participants to identify the allowable use of their data by NMFS.
6. We asked two veterinarians, Larry Herbst and Elliott Jacobson, both of whom are associated with the ACCSTR, to write a paper describing proper handling procedures to protect the health of sea turtles and biologists. They wrote an excellent paper *Recommendations for Activities Involving Brief Captivity with Non-Invasive or Minimally Invasive Procedures*.
7. We established a web site for the CMTTP [<http://accstr.ufl.edu/cmttp.html>]. The web site includes instructions on how to obtain tags and applicators and all of the CMTTP documents:
 - CMTTP New Policy [request for payment and new tag return address and offer of reward]
 - CMTTP Requesting Tags and Data Policy
 - CMTTP Protocols for Handling, Tagging, and Measuring Marine Turtles
 - *Recommendations for Activities Involving Brief Captivity with Non-Invasive or Minimally Invasive Procedures* by L. H. Herbst and E. R. Jacobson

The web site also has the following two documents in Adobe Acrobat pdf format:

- CMTTP Tag Request Form
 - CMTTP Tagging Data Form
8. We mailed a letter describing the new status of CMTTP and the above web site to all past and present CMTTP participants (n = 80) who were listed in the CMTTP files. We also requested an update of contact information from these participants and an estimate of number of tags needed in the coming year to help plan tag purchases. To date, we have received 19 responses.

9. We established an account with the University of Florida Foundation to receive payments for tags and applicators.
10. We transferred all of the CMTTP computer files from dBase to Access.
11. We invested substantial time cleaning up the computer files transferred to us. In particular, the file FINDTAG required significant effort. Every individual data sheet in the CMTTP files was reviewed in order to link turtles recaptured in subsequent years with their original tagging data. Many gaps in the FINDTAG database were filled in this manner, and substantial correspondence was conducted with CMTTP participants in an effort to fill in additional gaps in the database. Much time was also invested in filling in missing information in the NEWTAG database. As information became available or as information was found in the files, we were able to match the pit tag numbers with flipper tag numbers of individual turtles.

Annual Activities of the CMTTP

1. In July 1999, we purchased 5000 Inconel tags (style 681) and 50 applicators from National Band and Tag Company. The tags have a UF return address and offer of a reward.
2. From 15 March 1999 through 31 March 2000, we distributed a total of 6400 tags and 45 applicators (Table 1). We received all required permits and project descriptions from each of these programs.
3. From 15 March 1999 through 31 March 2000, we received a total of \$1423.00 in payment for tags distributed from 15 March 1999 through 31 March 2000. Programs have indicated that an additional \$1160 will be sent to us. The University of Florida Foundation / CMTTP account contained \$1423.00 as of 31 March 2000.
4. Table 2 shows the responses that we have received from participants on the allowable use of tagging data by NMFS.
5. From 15 March 1999 through 31 March 2000, we received recapture reports for 336 sea turtles. Data were entered into the NEWTAG database, original taggers of the turtles were notified, and the individual reporting the tag was sent tagging information on the turtle.
6. From 15 March 1999 through 31 March 2000, we received electronic tagging data files from eight programs:
 - Jonatham Gorham (QURI)
 - Ben Higgins (GALV)
 - Jeff Schmid (JSCH & CHWK)
 - SCNR Seemap
 - Michael Bressette (IRLS)
 - Joanne Braun McNeill (BOFT)
 - Meg Lamont (MGLA)
 - VIMS

These files have been converted to Access, and files from each locality for each project have been combined into one file.

7. We reviewed individually all hard copy data sheets that were submitted without an electronic file and entered all recaptures into NEWTAG. All original tagging records were filed after their numbers were entered into FINDTAG.

Table 1. Number of tags and applicators distributed from 15 March 1999 through 31 March 2000 with cost-recovery information.

Issue Date	Organization	Number of Tags	Number of Applicators	Cost	No Funds Available	Check Promised	Check Received
3/24/99	BOFT	600	0	\$420	X		
4/26/99	SIRL	100	1	\$88	X		
4/16/99	GALV	200	0	\$140	X		
5/3/99	JISL	100	2	\$106	X		
5/7/99	PRNR	100	1	\$88	X		
6/14/99	UNAB	100	2	\$106	X		
6/15/99	CINC	100	1	\$88	X		
6/21/99	MIAM	900	17	\$936	X		
6/25/99	MMLB	200	0	\$140	X		
7/27/99	HBSP	100	0	\$70	X		
7/30/99	VIMS	200	0	\$140	X		
8/30/99	HHMP	200	0	\$140	X		
9/30/99	QURI	1000	2	\$736			\$736
9/30/99	CWLD	100	1	\$88			\$88
11/24/99	WHOL	500	0	\$350			\$350
12/17/99	EPCT	0	1	\$18			\$21
2/16/00	SIRL	100	0	\$70	X		
2/21/00	HHMP	100	0	\$70			\$70
3/6/00	SVAN	0	1	\$18			\$18
3/6/00	TAMU	100	0	\$70			\$70
3/6/00	HBSP	100	0	\$70	X		
3/6/00	GALV	400	0	\$280		X	
3/13/00	CMSC	100	0	\$70			\$70
3/27/00	BBIO	100	1	\$88		X	
3/27/00	SCNR	400	3	\$334		X	
3/27/00	SCNR	500	6	\$458		X	
3/27/00	BOFT	0	6	\$108	X		
Total		6400	45	\$5290		\$1160	\$1423

Table 2. List of allowable use of data approved by CMTTP participants.

Name	Organization	No additional use without permission	Present/ publish any data	Present/ publish my turtles recaptured elsewhere	Present/publish my recapture data of turtles tagged elsewhere
Kevin Bleck	HBSP		X		
Richie Moretti	HHMP		X	X	X
Jonathan Gorham	QURI		X		
Kate Mansfield	VIMS	X			
Ross Witham	WTHM		X		
Michael Bresette	SIRL				
Cheryl Ryder	WHOL				
John Kerivan	CWLD				
Jerris Foote	MMLB				
David Addison	CINC				
Thane Wibbels	UNAB				
Jan Caton	JISL				
Hector Horta	PRNR				
Joanne McNeill	BOFT				
Ben Higgins	GALV	X			
Andre Landry	TAMU	X			
Kris Williams	SVAN			X	
Glenn Harman	CMSC		X		
George Baird	BBIO		X	X	X
Mark Thompson	SCNR		X		
Sally Murphy	SCNR	X			
Kennard Watson	SABM				
Mark Dodd	GDNR	X			
Jonathan Aiken	CAYM				